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of which have been revealed to him by some spirit. A certain grass, said to be the favorite food of tapirs, is endowed with great medicinal virtues. It is used not only to cure but also to prevent sickness (Henry, 1941, p. 83). Massages play a great part in therapeutics. Sometimes these are so violent that the practitioner steps on the patient's stomach. The skin is frequently rubbed with pulverized barks or plants before the treatment. Burning herbs are used therapeutically, particularly for wounds. A patient bitten by a snake is laid upon a slanting platform over a fire and given warm water to drink to make him vomit. Maniser (1930, p. 784) was impressed by the number of people whose heads, arms, or legs were swathed in *Philodendron* for therapeutic purposes. To lessen fatigue on a long walk, the Indians bandage their legs up to the hip with tight braids. (On *Caingang* medicine, see Paula Souza, 1918, pp. 750–753.)

Bloodletting, which is practiced with a flint flake or a piece of glass, is a common cure for many ailments. Like many Indians, the *Caingang* treat fever with cold baths. Breathing on the affected spot is a common means of assisting a suffering person. Wounds are sprinkled with pulverized jaborandy powder.

When illness is caused by the loss of the soul, the patient may recover if appropriate words are spoken to induce the soul to return. It is often promised food. If the shaman's diagnosis reveals that the disease has been brought about by invisible missiles shot by a spirit, the cure consists of extracting them with the mouth. This procedure, however, was observed only among the *Aweikoma-Caingang* of Santa Catarina.

Magic practices.—To drive clouds away, old women blow against the right hand and then wave it toward the clouds, spreading the fingers as if to disseminate their breath. When the *Aweikoma-Caingang* desire rain, they put their mouths to the water and blow. They take some in their hands and cry, as they throw it upward, "Look here! Do like this." (Henry, 1941, p. 94.) Ashes thrown into a river are expected to stop its rise.

Divining.—According to Lozano (1873, 1:427), *Guayaná* shamans drank maté in order to consult spirits. Answering questions put to them by their clients, the shamans always said, "The grass [maté] told me this or that." Among modern *Aweikoma*, a man may be requested to drink maté and to belch while he is asked questions. A strong belch is interpreted as "No" and a weak one as "Yes" (Henry, 1941, p. 86).

In order to know which animals will be killed and where they will be found, the *Aweikoma-Caingang* set fire to a heap of pine-wood charcoal. The size of the spark corresponds to an animal species and the place where it twinkles indicates where the game will be slain.

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787 The *Caingang* of São Paulo believe that old women have the power of foretelling the future in dreams which they induce by taking the pulverized leaves of an unknown plant.

769 **Cult of the dead.**—This cult is "the foundation and strongest expression of the spiritual culture of the *Kaingang*" (Baldus, 1935, p. 52), as the whole community takes part in the ceremonies, and children are at this time assigned by their fathers or others to moiety subgroups.

The aim of veingrĕinyĕ, the main ritual, is to break the bonds uniting the living with the ghosts, who are driven to their last abode, where they remain harmless. It takes place when the maize is green and pine nuts are ripe, that is, sometime between the middle of April and June. It is organized by mourners for a parent, a sister, or a son, but never for a wife or a daughter; according to Manizer, the initiative is taken by a distant relative.

The green bough placed above the tomb announces the coming performance; the news of which is carried to nearby settlements by messengers appointed by the "master of the dance." One of the heralds blows a horn; another informs the gathered listeners of the date.

In the meantime, the organizer piles up wood and gathers honey and maize, kept in pots in a special place, for liquor. For 3 days before the festival, men dance around these containers, crying and singing funeral songs. The fermented beverages, poured into large troughs dug out of bottle-tree trunks, are heated by throwing red-hot potsherds into them. During the night before the feast, the organizer and his assistant go to the cemetery to cover the grave with earth.

In the morning, the trough is dragged to the plaza and food heaped around it. Men sing and beat the ground with a stamping tube.

On the day before veingrĕinyĕ, the visitors, blowing horns and bamboo flutes, arrive and are met by their hosts and treated to beer. The following afternoon, the members of the moiety subgroups, adorned with their distinctive facial paintings, are led separately to the cemetery by relatives of the deceased. At the head of each moiety are a singer and three dancers, as well as the close relatives. On the way, the singer with his subgroups stops by every tree at which the corpse bearers have rested en route and sings a song of meaningless syllables, shaking his rattle and kicking his feet back and forth. After this musical interlude, they resume marching, but the other moiety has to go through the same ceremony. When the first moiety reaches the cemetery, the same dance is performed over the grave, the singer standing over the head of the deceased. The remainder of the crowd remains outside the cemetery. Then the other moiety dances over the grave. When the ghost is thought to have been expelled, everyone shouts for joy and runs in all directions.

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hunter's skill. A branch from a very thorny bush is burnt and the charcoal mixed with the meat of the animal and eaten "so the hunter's arrows will cut and tear like the thorn."

The bee, since it is a thing that lives and moves, is included in the animistic conceptualization of the world. When the Kaingáng chop out a hive, they say: "Bee, produce! I chopped you out to make beer of you! Yukúi's wife died, and I am making beer of you so that I can cut his hair." Or if they find that the larvae have eaten all the honey, they take the larvae and cry: "Bee, produce! It is I! I am alive! You ate up your honey and that is why you did not produce." And they throw a stick into the hive. After they have taken the honey they rub the sugar over the outside of the tree to show how high up the new hive should extend, and as they do so they exclaim, "Bee, make your honey go up along this way and leave off here" (at the limit of the sugar). The Yukúi mentioned in the formula is an imaginary person whom they use as an excuse for taking the honey. The implication is that since the post-mourning ceremony is extremely important, Bee certainly would not begrudge honey taken under pressure of such a necessity. When a Kaingáng cries, "It is I," he implies that the bee knows him, for such a statement can be intelligible only when the speaker is known.

Behind the requests, commands, and adjurations of the hunting and honey-seeking formulae of the Kaingáng lies not a faith in the magical power of words, but a deep conviction that people will do whatever they are asked and that any reason is sufficient in this society where reasons are unimportant and needs are everything. Whoever asks the Kaingáng to work for him must understand that they are motivated not only by hope of gain but particularly by their fear of refusing. Whoever stands his ground and asserts his rights can move mountains.[28]

Divining

There is scarcely a phenomenon in nature which has not at some time an immediate bearing on the small and insecure cosmos of the Kaingáng. But the feeling that things outside of a man's own body have direct reference to it is reducible to a conception that most such things have a *destructive* reference. On the human level, the Kaingáng partially overcome this threat by extending their bodies through physical and emotional diffusion—the symbol of security is *ke kfié nyé*, to live in someone else. But everything outside of this social personality, that is to say, members of other extended families, is destructive. In the realm of the supernatural the

[28] This compulsive obedience is at the bottom of the fetal victims' attendance at feasts which they know are held solely to entrap them.

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Kaingáng have attempted the same extension of their positive emotional relationships, but with little success. The supernatural, to them, is an embodiment of terrors; for it is burdened with portents of death, and no matter what benefits the Kaingáng derive from the supernatural, death always dominates their outlook. In *vayá*, divining by belching, the great preoccupation is escape from death; *kumbĕdn*, divining by insects in the ashes of the dead, is completely devoted to omens of death; *kŏplĕgn*, divining with charcoal, is concerned with the location of animals that may be hunted and killed, or with the impending death of human beings, and the meteorological omens of rain, darkness, tempest, and flood are all portents of death.

The oral functions of biting, spitting, and blowing form part of supernatural curing techniques, but belching has been elevated to prophetic dignity. Through *vayá*, divining by belching, the Kaingáng obtain many important insights. Any adult who feels that he can divine by belching may take this function on himself, and he or she may be sought out and asked to drink an infusion of *matte*[26] so that his belches may give some information about the chances of death from the enemy, the hunting prospects in a given direction, or the whereabouts of a lost dog. The oracular belch always comes in answer to a request that is usually put to the practitioner in a form like this: "Belch to see whether, if I go to look for my wife and child, the enemy will see me." Then the practitioner drinks the infusion, and if he belches strongly it means "No"; and if weakly, "Yes."

Kumbĕdn, divining by insects, is connected with the exogamous system which the Kaingáng say they possessed far back in ancient times. According to this tradition the Kaingáng were divided into five groups, with each of which was associated a set of personal names and a design with which its members used to paint their bodies.[27] The Kaingáng still use these designs, but their only functions for two hundred years or more have been to protect the wearers against *kuplĕng* and supposedly to provide a point of reference for this system of divining by insects. To each group belong certain insects, the presence of which in funeral ashes betokened the impending death of a member of the group. A certain fly and a little butterfly called *zozo*, for example, indicated the future death of those who use the dot pattern; and other insects, among them all the different varieties of bees, a wasp, and insects that the Indians call *ápé* and *zhathakumbĕdn* foretold the death of someone who bore the line pattern.

In spite of the precise way in which the Kaingáng formulate it, they

[26] This is the familiar *yerba maté* or matte that grows wild in southeastern South America, particularly in Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.

[27] See Appendix B for full explanation of this scheme.

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were so incapable of adhering to any such formal scheme that in actual practise this system of *kumbēdn* was almost completely superseded by other interpretations. The insects that were named as having oracular significance for each group were rarely mentioned in practice, and interest was directed toward different insects and ones that had no personal reference. When a funeral pyre was extinguished the Kaingáng came to look at the ashes, and they could tell by the position and condition of an insect how, when, and where one of their number would die. "The *kumbēdn* of one who will die far away is on the edge of the ashes. The head points outward. A death near by is shown by the insect's head pointing inward from the periphery. . . . *Pānkōklá* points in the direction in which the man will be bitten by a snake. *It does not tell the name. Ndādnwaichudndādn*[38] is lying in the mouth of the *pānkōklá*. It showed the biting of Nyepá. 'A big snake will bite Nyepá,' said Konggó. Nyepá's *kumbēdn* was large. It was lying on the periphery of the place where Vádn was burnt. *They make suyá on these occasions, naming the people, until a big belch comes and tells who it will be.* If one is to be killed with a club by another group of our own people the *kumbēdn* will be intact. The *kumbēdn* of those who are to be killed by Brazilians will have shattered legs, or their heads will be cut off. . . . Another will have cut wings. If someone is to fall the *kōnggó* [insect] will be crushed in little pieces. When Patá died the bee showed rumpled and with twisted wings. This shows that the person is going to die while entire [i.e. of sickness]."

Some of the associations in this abbreviated account of *kumbēdn* are clear; others are unknown to me. The significance of the shattered appearance of the *kumbēdn* of the victims of Brazilians and the intact condition of those killed by Indians was rooted in the belief that Brazilians always cut their victims into little pieces while the victims of the Kaingáng were always left whole. The origin of the belief that a crushed insect indicated a fall from a tree is self-evident, while the belief that *pānkōklá* foreshadows snake-bite was based on some association of this insect with the snake (*pān*, snake; *kōkla*, ceremonial father; hence, the snake's ceremonial father). The association of bees with the line-pattern group arises from a mythological connection between the line people and bees. Bees are the *mang*[39] of the line people, just as the tapir is the *mang* of the dot people.

Kumbēdn was sometimes used in association with *suvīgn*, a kind of war ritual intended to make the enemy sleep deeply. Before attacking, the Kaingáng "clean the ground and cut a stick. They take off the bark and scrape the stick. They sink the post and stamp their feet as they hold on

[38] An insect.

[39] Owned animals.

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724 to it. Then the Brazilians sleep. This is done with the *poimbēngnggēlē* [tree]. As its fruit fall with the wind, so will men sleep. They sing thus when they make *vavēgn:*

mēng nē hoi ke nyang ve
tiger is
mēng nē klēgn mbēgn yō va tōgn mē ē ya yukdi[30] *kų*
tiger is animal large trail thereabouts its teeth
hui ke nyang vē
mēng nē hui ke nyang vē mēng nē hui ke nyang vē
tiger is

[This song means that] the tiger waits for the tapir [large animal] on its trail and that they [the Indians] are going to do the same thing. *Yukdi* means that the tiger seizes animals with its teeth."

There is another song:

ngguivé chu yii chu ka eput kdi tōgn mē ke nyang mu va
a rat

which means that "*ngguivé*[31] is little, but it seizes birds, and therefore they want to do the same as it does. All the men go and make *vavēgn*. Then they walk a little way and come back and go to sleep. The next day early the shaman goes and sees the *kumbēdn* [and says], 'That one will be killed.' His *kumbēdn* is in his footprints.[32] *Kōlǫ*[33] or *patá*[33] lie dead in the footprint in imitation of death. It is his imitation."

787 *Kōplēgn*, divining with charcoal, is done in pitch darkness, and while anyone can do it, it requires rapport with the deer spirit. A pyramidal wick-like heap about a half inch high and six inches long is made of the charcoal of pine, cuqueiro, or canela wood, and as it is ignited they cry: "Deer, make *kōplēgn* with me!" In the darkness they watch the red starlike sparks appear and disappear as the glow travels along the wick very much as a cigarette burns, except that in *kōplēgn* there is no steady uniform glow but a constant twinkling as the burning proceeds. Then they can tell by the size of the spark and its location what animal will be killed and where it

[30] This is a word which I never came across elsewhere. In no Kaingáng song is the meaning clear from the context, because great liberties are taken with syntax. Very often when interpretations are given, the informants prefix their interpretations with "probably." Some of these are clearly fanciful.

[31] In this song we are faced with a problem similar to that in the first. There is much less evidence for the derivation of any meaning from the verse. The only words that mean anything are *ngguivé* and *tōgn mé*, which means thereabouts.

[32] On the trail.

[33] Insects.

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will be encountered. Big sparks mean tapirs, smaller ones indicate deer, and so on down through monkeys and birds. If the sparks appear on the left side of the heap, the animals will be killed on the left side of the river; if they twinkle on the right side, the animal will fall on the right side of the river; and if the spark appears near the watcher, the animal will be killed near at hand. *Kóplēgn* never fails, because so many sparks appear that they cover every eventuality, and the Indians remember the details of the divination for a long time. 787

When an animal is killed weeks after the ethnologist hovered breathlessly over the beautiful little heap of glowing charcoal, he will hear an Indian say: "Ah! This is the jacutinga I saw in the *kóplēgn*." The impending death of human beings can be seen in the *kóplēgn* also, but no one can see his own death.

Totemism

In the religion of the Kaingáng, totemism, i.e. a close religious association between an individual (or a group) and some natural phenomenon, is simply a special emphasis in the general pattern of close associations between mankind and natural phenomena. The tiger and the tapir, the Kaingáng say, are Wanyekí's[94] *mang* because he made them in the very beginning when the first people emerged out of the shoreless sea in the east and over the "hard" mountains to the west. Some of these conceptions that link men with animals and plants appear in one of the confused origin myths of the Kaingáng, but it is impossible to establish clear connections between what is said in these obviously fossilized myths and what one hears from informants. The pine tree is believed to be the exclusive property of the circle people, but from the myth that refers to the origin of an (unnamed) animal from the bark of the young pine it is impossible to determine why the pine tree might not just as well be the property of the dot or disk people. The mark system has been confused for the past two hundred years. The association between Klendó (i.e. the line people) and the bee is explained as follows: "When Wanyekí came out first they found Klendó eating honey and therefore said it was Klendó's. A man saw Bee. Supernatural Bee has a name like man. Padnmbá [one of the line people] saw it and learnt the names. Then he said that the names were Klendó, Vomblé, Nyntkaé, Kanyahé, Waipó, Lugnmú, Vukthá, Pepó. *Nggiyádn* said: 'Our names are thus. Let Klendó come with his offspring. His offspring are no more in the bad land.' When the bees heard this they migrated." 773 825

[94] Wanyekí is a male personal name and is used as a generic reference to all the dot people. Of course, in addition to Wanyekí there are many other names, both male and female, that belong to the dot people.

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761 Far from permitting them control over species of plants and animals, the pessimistic totemism of the Kaingáng simply adds one more gloomy trait to the prevailingly somber character of their supernaturalism. Their totems are solely omens of death, for "When the Klendó are about to die there is no honey—there are only bees. When the Wanyekí are about to die the tapirs are very thin, because they are Wanyekí's *mang*. The pine tree belongs to Thethé [the circle people], and when they are about to die there are no pine cones. When they die they burn them in a dry pine tree. Before Chulí fell there were no pine cones—and then he fell. They burnt him in a dry pine tree. Before the Brazilians killed Kuikégn, the pines were the same way."

762 Like most peoples the world over, the Kaingáng reject certain things as foods while they accept others. But their preferences have little to do with their totemic ideas. There is a story in an origin myth of one of the line people who swam about in the water so much that he became a capavary, so that now the line people do not eat capavary; if they were to do so it would be like eating their own people. But almost no one at all eats capavary, nor do they eat armadillo or paca, that delicious fat little rodent that eludes the hunter like a streak of light. Some people abstain from tiger, but others eat its heart to make them valiant like the tiger, which roams and fights alone. None of these taboos are observed by everyone. Some animals from which the Kaingáng abstain were practically impossible for them to kill under the conditions of their old life, in which they had no traps or boats. The capavary is taken by trapping, the paca by trapping or by pursuit in a boat from which the hunter may kill it with a trident in the shallow water where it has hidden. The swift-flying and hypersensitive wild ducks are extremely hard to approach, and the meat of anteater and certain water birds has a very bad flavor. There seems to be less reason for abstaining from the toad, the armadillo, and the tiger. The Kaingáng say that they do not eat the tiger because its fat is white (not yellow like other animals') and that they abstain from armadillo because its bones break so easily that they are afraid their own will break.

All of these things that the Kaingáng do not eat are called *thangglĩgn*, which is the term they use for anything dirty. People who eat things that are *thangglĩgn* will lose their teeth, break their bones, or grow old prematurely.

Omens

787 The prevailing reason for the interest of the Kaingáng in omens is death. "I saw that before Padnmbá died it rained very heavily first," said Chukembégn. "Then the river rose after his death. The bees did not make honey—they just lived in the trees." All of this was because Padnmbá was

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one of the line people, and since the line people came out of the shoreless sea, rain and swollen rivers are auguries of death for them. But when dot people die the rivers dry up, because they came over the "hard" mountain. "Before Wanyekí died, the river dried up until you could hardly pass with a canoe. Then when he died it rose a great deal [fifty feet]. It flooded José's mill and carried off the corn."

If a man's arrows fall on him at night he says, "I am going to die, that is why my arrows fell on me." There is a way of seeking omens by shooting arrows into the night. "At night a man calls out, 'Come here!' The men come to him. Late at night they take their arrows and shoot out into the darkness and talk after their arrows—'Shall I grow old?' They will die if the arrow goes far and sticks in a tree. If it falls on the ground they will grow old. When my father's went only a short distance they joked: 'That one cannot see at night and lands in a tree.' His mother said he was about to die; therefore it happened. I myself did this when I was *kēlú*—I shot far and it fell in the earth."

Rain and drought are omens of death, but a particularly evil omen is the sun shower. Even when omens have some other significance than the foretelling of death, the latter may be included in the portents. "They put their bows and arrows on top of posts and give them to the moon, saying: 'Moon, I give you my bow! Shoot an animal on my bow!' Next day when they come to them, cobwebs are all over them and fireflies are caught in them. This shows that they will kill tapir, for firefly is the tapir's *kumbēdn*." But they can also tell by this technique when a man is about to die, because then there is no cobweb on his bow. Sometimes they would put their pots in a clear place and leave them there all night. Next day, "if there are cobwebs on them, the owner of the favored pot will kill a tapir and cook. If a person is about to die, it will rain on the pot."

There is, however, one way of taking omens that is not used to foretell deaths. It is by snatching meat from a pot. "Before they go hunting they cook a little deer, *tateti*, pig, tapir, monkey; the arm of a howler monkey, the wing of a jacutinga, or a hawk. They clear the ground and put these in pots. The men are all together, and they rush to them and thrust their hands into the pots. They can tell by what they take out what they will kill. One who will shoot nothing gets nothing." Sometimes, on the other hand, when they were about to attack the Brazilians, "they would cut up cloth into pieces and put them in a pot. They would then rush to the pot and snatch them out. They mixed earth and wax with the cloth. Getting earth showed that they would kill Brazilians; getting cloth showed that they would get Brazilian clothing. They would also put axes and knives in the pots and pieces of wood with which they indicated pots. One who would get nothing from the Brazilians would get nothing in the rush."